

Dean's Scholars Review and Scoring

Applications will be reviewed using both an NIH-style Overall Impact Score and a 100-point scoring rubric. The **NIH-style Overall Impact Score is the primary ranking score and should reflect the reviewer's integrated judgment** regarding the likelihood that participation in the Dean's Scholar Program will position the applicant for competitive external funding and long-term success as an independent clinical and translational investigator. The **100-point scoring rubric serves as a structured reviewer aid intended to promote consistency across reviewers** and ensure that all major application domains receive thoughtful consideration.

NIH-Style Overall Impact Score

1 Exceptional	2 Outstanding	3 Excellent
4 Very Good	5 Good	6 Satisfactory
7 Fair	8 Marginal	9 Poor

Scored Review Criteria

Scored Review Criterion	Points	Reviewers Should Assess	Point Range Guide
Candidate Potential	20	Demonstrated commitment to a clinical and translational research career; research productivity appropriate for career stage; prior research experience and accomplishments; potential for successful transition to external funding; evidence of leadership, perseverance, and scholarly growth. Primary materials reviewed include the CV, applicant NIH biosketch, Candidate Statement, prior productivity, research experience, leadership activities, and scholarly trajectory.	18–20: Exceptional candidate with strong evidence of future research independence. 14–17: Strong candidate with minor weaknesses. 10–13: Moderate potential with notable developmental needs. 0–9: Limited evidence of readiness for intensive career development support.
Research Strategy and Funding Potential	20	Significance of the scientific problem; innovation; scientific rigor; feasibility within the two-year award period; quality of experimental design and analysis plan; power calculation or sample size justification when applicable; potential problems and alternative strategies; expected deliverables; and likelihood of generating data, publications, or other products needed for a K award, equivalent career development award, R-level funding application, or other external funding. Primary materials reviewed include the Specific Aims, Research Strategy, timeline, references, budget alignment, and feasibility information.	18–20: Outstanding science with strong likelihood of supporting future external funding. 14–17: Strong proposal with minor weaknesses. 10–13: Moderate scientific merit. 0–9: Major scientific or feasibility concerns.
Mentorship and Research	20	Primary mentor's funding history; mentor's track record developing clinician-scientists; evidence of	18–20: Exceptional mentoring team with demonstrated

Environment		successful K-to-R transitions among prior mentees when applicable; complementary expertise of the mentorship team; availability and commitment of mentors; structured mentoring plan and meeting cadence; access to collaborators, methodologists, research resources, institutional infrastructure, and operational supports. Reviewers should specifically consider prior K23/K08 awardees mentored, prior R01-funded mentees, mentoring outcomes and promotions, stability of the mentor's funding portfolio, and access to needed research resources. Primary materials reviewed include mentor biosketches, Mentorship Plan, mentor letters, Chair letter, and descriptions of institutional and departmental resources.	record of developing funded investigators. 14–17: Strong mentorship environment. 10–13: Adequate mentorship with notable gaps. 0–9: Significant concerns regarding mentorship structure.
Career Development Plan	20	Specificity of career goals; identification of training gaps; quality of proposed educational and developmental activities; appropriateness of mentorship strategy; publication plan; grant development timeline; responsible conduct of research training; alignment between training activities, mentorship, research project, and future funding goals; and evidence that the plan is individualized rather than generic. Reviewers should assess whether the proposed activities address barriers to research independence and provide a realistic pathway toward external funding. Primary materials reviewed include the Candidate Statement, Career Development Plan, Further Educational Plans, planned coursework or master's training, publication plan, and grant development timeline.	18–20: Outstanding and highly individualized career development plan. 14–17: Strong plan with minor weaknesses. 10–13: Adequate plan lacking detail or focus. 0–9: Poorly developed plan.
Departmental and Institutional Commitment	20	Protected time commitment; departmental support; alignment with departmental research priorities; availability of resources and infrastructure; feasibility of the protected research environment; commitment to departmental matching funds when required; and long-term institutional commitment to the candidate's success. Primary materials reviewed include the Chair letter, protected time commitment, departmental resources, institutional infrastructure, long-term support plan, and feasibility of the protected research environment.	18–20: Exceptional support and protected research environment. 14–17: Strong support. 10–13: Moderate support. 0–9: Limited support or concerns about feasibility.

Total Score

Criterion	Points
Candidate Potential	20
Research Strategy and Funding Potential	20
Mentorship and Research Environment	20
Career Development Plan	20
Departmental and Institutional Commitment	20
Total	100